

AN
ESSAY
ON THE
MANAGEMENT OF SLAVES,
AND ESPECIALLY,
ON THEIR RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION;
READ BEFORE THE
AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY OF ST. JOHN'S COLLETON.

BY WHITEMARSH B. SEABROOK,
PRESIDENT.

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AN ESSAY.

TO the planter, there is no subject more important, and none which has received so little of his attention, as the management of Slaves. Whilst every other topic connected with his pursuit has been minutely investigated, this matter, on a thorough knowledge of which, not only his success as a tiller of the soil, but it may be, the ownership of his entire estate, depends, has rarely been the theme of private conversation—never that of public discussion. Without stopping to inquire into the causes of this extraordinary circumstance, it will be sufficient to remark, that the crisis has at length arrived, when duty, superadded to motives of a higher obligation, demands, that the proper discipline of our coloured population should become the subject of a full and free examination. In submitting some general views, I have only to express a hope, that my example will be instrumental in inducing others to offer on the altar of the public good the rich fruits of their experience and reflection.

A few preliminary observations, it is proper that I should make. In the first place, I must be permitted to say, that, in the judgment of my fellow-citizens, slavery is not inconsistent with the laws of nature or of God. The bible informs us, that it was established and sanctioned by Divine authority among even the elect of Heaven, and the history of every age and country attests, that personal servitude has been the lot of a considerable portion of mankind. I believe, moreover, that successfully to carry on the great business of the world, slavery in some form is as necessary as the division of labour itself.

By the constitution of the United States, and that of South-Carolina, slaves are viewed in the two-fold relation of persons and property. As persons, three-fifths of them are represented in Congress. As property, they may be taxed whenever *capital* is to bear a part of the public burden; but, I apprehend, not otherwise. In our State Legislature, slaves are represented, not because they are persons, but for the reason, that they constitute the *property* of our citizens. As persons, they are subjected to an annual capitation tax, payable by the owner. It will thus be perceived, that between the two constitutions a remarkable difference exists, on a point of vital consequence to the whole Southern community. It may here be remarked too, that the General Government can in no wise interfere between master and bondsman; nor has it any authority directly or indirectly to legislate on the matter, except in the case of the importation of slaves. It is also worthy of especial notice, that fugitive slaves cannot rightfully be protected by any of the States.*

Every plantation represents a little community differing from its chief in colour, habits and general character. The members of this community are his lawful property. Over them he exercises executive, legislative, and judicial powers. The right of the master to his slave is not, however, absolute. The relation between them is limited and restrained by the laws of the State, to a few of which I will advert.

1. The felonious killing of a slave by a white person is murder.

2. If a slave suffer in life, limb or member, where no white person is present, the owner or other person, having the care or management of such slave, is adjudged guilty of such offence, unless he can make the contrary appear by good and sufficient evidence, or shall by his own oath clear and exculpate himself.

3. No master can emancipate his slaves.

4. He is obliged, under the penalty of a fine for each and every offence, to allow them sufficient clothing and food.

5. He cannot compel them to labour more than fourteen hours in the twenty-four.

* See Appendix, Note A.

The value of our slave property is not justly appreciated. To their owners, our slaves yield two distinct interests; the one annual, or that which arises from their labour; the other, a contingent or prospective interest, the issue of the females. To the Southern States, and, I may properly add, to the human family, the inhabitants of Africa are absolutely essential. Without their services, *as slaves*, a large portion of the habitable globe, yielding the richest productions, would at this moment be a barren waste. The negro never has, and, from causes inseparable from his nature, never can labour *profitably* as a freeman. History, ancient and modern, evinces the truth of this position. Our own country furnishes abundant evidence on the subject. St. Domingo, as a colony, supplied Europe with the fruits of slave industry. Emancipation has nearly destroyed the ability of that fertile Island to provide even for its own wants.* Who but the black man, controlled by his master, can toil successfully under the action of a southern sun? What member of the Confederacy can vie with South-Carolina, or any other slaveholding State, in the value of her productions? Strike from existence our negro population, and how inconsiderable would be the revenue of the Union arising from imports. From what source would then be drawn the many millions that are annually appropriated by a prodigal Congress? If slavery had ceased simultaneously in every State, at the termination of our late war with Great-Britain, when the General Government owed about 120 millions of dollars, in what time would the debt have been extinguished? These and other questions of similar import, it would be difficult for the most zealous abolitionist to answer. The worth of our slaves, and the important station which their owners necessarily occupy, may be illustrated by another consideration. An increase of wealth on the part of any citizen obviously augments the aggregate wealth of the State, but it cannot affect that State politically. An addition of \$1,000,000 to the private fortune of Daniel Webster, would not give to Massachusetts more weight than she now possesses in the Federal Councils. On the other hand, every increase of slave property in South-Carolina, is a fraction thrown into the

* See Appendix Note B.

scale by which her representation in Congress is determined. It is evident, therefore, that the slave-holder, as a member of the great American family, holds an elevated rank, and one of high responsibility. An injudicious application of his authority might beggar him and his neighbours; nay, involve the whole community in irretrievable ruin. And what is of far weightier consequence, omission or neglect to improve the moral condition of his people, is an offence for which hereafter there may be no forgiveness. It ought hence to be borne in perpetual remembrance, that we of the South have duties to discharge, which no other citizen is liable to perform. The manner in which those duties can best be executed, shall be unfolded in the sequel of my remarks.

The following general considerations should never for a moment be lost sight of:—

1. That the conduct of the slave is not to be regulated entirely by the same rules which are so well calculated to insure the faithfulness of the white servant.

2. As slavery exists in South-Carolina, the actions of the citizen should rigidly conform to that state of things. If abstract opinions on the rights of man are allowed in any instance to modify the police system of a plantation, the authority of the master, and the value of his estate, will be as certainly impaired, as that the peace of the blacks themselves will be injuriously affected. Whoever believes slavery to be immoral or illegal, and, under that belief, frames a code of laws for the government of his people, is practically an enemy to the State. Such a person is utterly unfit to fulfil the obligations of his trust, and the most acceptable service he could render his fellow-citizens, would be to emigrate with his property to the land of the Tappans and the Garrisons.

3. The connexion between the master and his bondsman should be distinctly understood by both. The impertinent and officious interference of foreigners, renders this necessary. From education and habit, the slave feels the inferiority of his station, and seems only conscious that he was born to do the will of another. With few and simple ideas, his mind is undisturbed by those false notions of liberty and equality which the modern philanthropist is struggling to disseminate. Amply provided with food and raiment, protected in his person, and with-

out the cares which pollute the stream of the white man's happiness, he toils in peace and contentment. As human beings, however, slaves are liable to all the infirmities of our nature. Ignorant and fanatical, none are more easily excited. Incendiaries might readily embitter their enjoyments, and render them a curse to themselves and the community. Under this aspect, the *conduct* of the master ought to be the only criterion by which the servant is to know his true situation. He should be practically treated as a slave, and thoroughly taught the true cardinal principles on which our peculiar institutions are founded, viz: that to his owner he is bound by the laws of God and man, and that no human authority can sever the link which unites them. The great aim, then, of the slaveholder should be to keep his people in strict subordination. In this, it may in truth be said, lies his entire duty. What are the means best calculated to effect this object?

I. Remove all temptation to the perpetration of crime. It is better on ordinary principles to prevent crime than to punish it. The slave should never have it in his power to say, that he committed a fault from the misconduct of his master. He should consequently be well fed, well clothed and housed, carefully attended in sickness, and never over-worked. Let the owner, whilst watching the course of others, who by associating and trafficking with his people, impair their usefulness, look occasionally into his own conduct. He will, perhaps, find, that through his neglect or covetousness, the laws of the plantation are as often violated, as from any other cause.

The prominent offences of the slave are to be traced in most instances to the use of intoxicating liquors. This is one of the main sources of every insurrectionary movement which has occurred in the United States. We are, therefore, bound by interest, as well as the common feelings of humanity, to arrest the progress of what may emphatically be called, the contagious disease of our coloured population. What have become of the millions of freemen who once inhabited our widely extended country? Ask the untiring votaries of Bacchus. Can there be a doubt but that the authority of the master alone prevents his slaves from experiencing the fate of the aborigines of America? To avert the threatening danger, the means which ought to be resorted to are simple, yet, I apprehend,

they would be entirely adequate to the crisis. As a preliminary step, let every Agricultural or Police Association, bind its members by a constitutional provision, to inhibit by all practicable measures the use of ardent spirits to the servants; and, in the name of the Society, to institute an action against every violator of the law of the State on that subject. The aid of the Legislature might then be invoked; and, I cannot at present do better than earnestly to recommend to that department of the government two sections of a bill,* which it was my misfortune unsuccessfully to support at the last session. Complete success on this head would be attended with these important consequences:—the reformation of the moral condition of our whole black population, and the extinction of an occupation in which those only engage who are prepared, through the medium of the slave, to depredate on the property of their fellow-citizens. Between them and the negro, there is seldom any difference in mind or character. The shops of the former constitute the nightly rendezvous of the lower order. *There* the white and the blackman, the abolitionist and the fanatic, meet on terms of perfect equality. The poison of the one, invigorated by copious draughts of the inebriating beverage, is poured into the ready ear of the other. In this way, new and pernicious ideas are infused into the susceptible mind of the African. Contentment is converted into misery, to forget which the cup is frequently emptied. Insubordination creeps on apace, until, perhaps, he who bore a high reputation for faithfulness and honesty, becomes at length a degraded sot, or a common infringer of every domestic regulation. It is time the attention of the public was aroused to this momentous subject. The evil, already great, is rapidly increasing. If not speedily arrested, any attempt in future to check its progress, might eventuate in consequences that we shall have occasion greatly to deplore.

II. On every plantation there should exist a well regulated system of rewards and punishments. In relation to our slaves, if bad conduct merits punishment, good actions deserve reward. He who habitually does well is entitled to the avowed approbation of his master. The household should not only be taught to speak his praise, but

* See Appendix Note C.

little acts of kindness should often be extended to him. The distinction between him and the refractory labourer cannot be too broad. Favours should aid the correct conduct of the one—fear be brought to operate on the character of the other. No human being is more susceptible of flattery than the negro. It is his assailable point, whether to effect a right or an improper purpose. It has frequently come under my notice, that what repeated and severe punishments could not accomplish, an appeal to the pride of the delinquent has readily attained. Let him then receive at times a cordial “well done,” and you strike a cord which vibrates to the heart. By awakening the sensibilities of his nature, the spirit that was prone to evil is subdued, perhaps forever.

The object of punishment is the reformation of the criminal and the preventing of others from committing the like offence. It is manifest then, that such punishments and such a mode of inflicting them ought to be resorted to, as make the strongest and most lasting impression on the mind. It is equally obvious that, crimes are more easily prevented by the *certainty* than the severity of punishment. Take from man that great gift of Heaven, hope; reduce it to an absolute certainty,—that solitary confinement or transportation, for example, will follow the commission of particular offences, and you at once adopt one of the most efficient measures to aid the cause of virtue and humanity. Man is terrified at the approach of any evil, however slight, if it be inevitable. The prospect of experiencing the clemency or pardon* of the magistrate has always negatively operated as an incentive to the violation of public engagements. Again: the laws of the plantation should be few, simple, and well understood. What is a crime in the eye of the white man may not be so in that of the negro. To the former, ignorance of the law is no excuse; but this judicial maxim ought not to apply to a population uneducated and incapable of estimating the force of legal or moral obligations, unless due means have been used to enlighten their minds on the subject. Among the many duties of the master, the instruction of his people in the rules and regulations by which they are to be governed, I consider one of the most important. It is palpably

*The power of pardon properly resides in the Governor. The public interest requires that it should be rarely exercised.

wrong to arraign him as a culprit who is not aware of having offended against any authority. It is the very essence of tyranny to punish a servant severely for a transgression which, from the want of information, is, in his judgment, no fault, or at least, but a trivial mis-demeanor. To these observations I would add, that the master should never execute the law under the influence of heat or passion. I am fully aware of the difficulty of carrying this suggestion into effect. To restrain feelings, powerfully excited by the gross misconduct of one who is governed by your will, requires an extraordinary effort of the mind. Yet, I am satisfied, that in furtherance of that view, every exertion ought to be made. The criminal should know by proof, the most direct and unequivocal, that the punishment is inflicted, not to gratify, a spirit of revenge, but in the strict execution of a solemn duty; he ought to be convinced by word and deed, that when the offence for which he suffers has been expiated the blessings of the law will be extended equally to him as to the others. By this means the authority of the master will not only be feared, but what perhaps is as essential, it will be respected.

How ought slaves to be punished? On this subject we may safely appeal to experience. It is certain that no punishment is equally efficient in every case. Whilst the occasional application of the whip tends greatly to preserve the obedience of some, it is not even dreaded by others. Under these circumstances, the slave-holder is bound to study thoroughly the character of his people—to watch their conduct with a sleepless eye in order to discover the secret spring of their actions. The punishments usually resorted to are—1st. Corporal. 2d. Solitary confinement in stocks, or solitary confinement alone. 3d Deprivation of privileges. 4th. Additional labour. 5th. Transportation. When corporal punishment is inflicted pursuant to a law of the State, the slave can receive but 39 stripes; it is seldom indeed that the owner gives as many. This mode of arresting the commission of crime cannot be dispensed with. In many cases it is the only instrument which can confidently be relied on to meliorate the character of the refractory delinquent. If to our army the disuse of the lash has been prejudicial, to the slave-holder it would operate to deprive him of the main support to his authority. For the first class of offences, I consider in-

prisonment in stocks at night, with or without hard labour in the day, as a powerful auxiliary in the cause of good government. His regular duty having been performed, the slave anticipates the approach of night with the liveliest emotions. To him it is the period when he can freely indulge in the various inclinations of the mind. *Then*, unrestrained and unwatched, if I may be allowed the expression, he acts in any manner which his interest or his pleasure might dictate. Deprive him of this great source of enjoyment—take from him these hours usually passed with his associates, and you readily accomplish that which no other known scheme has yet effected. To the correctness of this opinion many can bear testimony. Experience has convinced me, that there is no punishment to which the slave looks with more horror than that upon which I am commenting, and none which has been attended with happier results.

Among the privileges of the slave, may be numbered that of *task* work. When his daily labour is finished, he is at liberty to cultivate his crop, or otherwise to attend to his own concerns. For some offences the changing of task work into constant labor from sun to sun, reserving a short period only for meals, is a wise and useful regulation. To this punishment, if the crime be of an aggravated nature, the with-holding from the transgressor his usual portion of tobacco, meat and other comforts, might be added. Another very efficacious means of correcting bad conduct, is the imposition of labour additional to the task work. For theft, this is a rational punishment. It is proper on ordinary principles, that the slave by his labour should compensate for the loss, which, through his knavery, the master has sustained. Whenever it is obvious, that the character of the criminal is not likely to be amended by any of the means to which I have so briefly adverted, or, that frequent recurrence to rigorous punishment, is unavoidable to attain that end, it is far better to expel him from society than to contaminate it by his example.

Having thus cursorily examined the relation which our slaves bear to us, the authority we can legitimately exercise over them, and our connexion as slave-holders with South-Carolina and the United States, I will not pass unnoticed the relation which ought to exist among the slaves themselves. Under this head the duties which devolve on

us are onerous, and I regret to say, but illy attended to. In general the intercourse between servants is as unrestrained as the most unbridled ambition could desire. The daily business of the plantation having been finished, the power of the master practically ceases. He knows not, and apparently cares not, in what way the hours of the night are passed by his people. To them I am in favor of great latitude of action, but decidedly opposed to any course of conduct which is likely to corrupt their morals, or to break the bond which unites them as one great family. The police of the plantation should be strict, without trespassing unreasonably on the time of the slave. Any amusement which does not strike at subordination, or tend to the inculcation of vice, may readily be allowed.

At one time polygamy was a common crime : it is now of rare occurrence. Every attempt to violate the moral law on this subject ought not only to be frustrated, but punished with exemplary severity. Another point of material consequence is, the adjudication of cases, in which the owner is compelled to officiate as appeal judge. All minor differences may be settled finally by the driver or overseer, but on a matter involving deeply the character of the slave, or, on graver questions, it becomes the duty and interest of the master to determine in the last resort ; and it is competent for him so to discharge his solemn trust, as to induce the conviction, that he has deliberately investigated the whole affair, and settled it according to the dictates of justice. Much is gained if the servant believe, that his case is safe in the hands of his master, and that to him he confidently looks as a common friend.

Between slaves on the same plantation there is a deep sympathy of feeling which binds them so closely together, that a crime committed by one of their number is seldom discovered through their instrumentality. This is an obstacle to the establishment of an efficient police which the domestic legislator can with difficulty surmount. On this point the following suggestions may not be inappropriate. Make it the *interest* of servants to keep your commandments, and to expose, at your bidding, all who infringe them. How is this to be done ? By elevating the character of the informer—by kind treatment and rewards—and, when the offender is detected, by punishing with rigour every one, who, on examination, it clearly appeared, knew

by whom the crime in question was perpetrated. If your investigations prove unsuccessful, rather than the law should be violated with impunity, it is far better that the whole plantation be punished. Let your people be arraigned to undergo the penalty of disobedience, and before the unpleasant task is commenced, the real criminal will stand openly before you. To avoid a resort to this expedient, every plantation should have its accountable agents. The driver and the guard are the proper persons.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

About three years ago, the public attention was invited to this subject by the establishment of associations in the parish of St. Luke's, the sole object of which was the religious instruction of negroes on plantations, by Missionaries especially commissioned for that purpose. Of the result of the experiment I am uninformed. When the scheme was first suggested I doubted its policy. My opposition at that time, was not, however, strictly to the system itself, but to the mode in which it was proposed to carry it into effect. The intermixture of plantations, and the employment of *any one* whose profession it was to teach the word of God, I deemed insuperable objections. Clergymen have high and important functions to discharge. They are undeniably the most useful class in society when they keep rigidly within the limits of their station. That their power, although exercised under the solemn obligations of conscience, may be so wielded as to endanger the peace and happiness of the community, no disinterested man would be prepared to deny. In general, our religious instructors are comparatively deficient in the practical knowledge of mankind. This arises mainly from the nature and character of their calling. Moving within a limited sphere, in which by common consent they are subjected to no positive control; promulgating doctrines and advancing opinions that in the popular judgment, it would be rash openly to assail; having it not in their power to mix freely with all classes, or, where that is possible, incapable from the reserve and diffidence which their presence inspires, of forming a correct estimate of the secret springs of human action; from the force of these circumstances, Ministers of the Gospel are apt, in the execution

of their solemn trust, steadfastly to array abstract notions, engendered in the closet, in opposition to principles which the public weal, if no other consideration, invokes us strenuously to uphold. Incited by theoretical speculations, they sometimes hurriedly fix on a point to which they would carry the objects of their charge, with the utter disbelief, that any other than the happiest consequences can result from the attempt. Let me now make an application of what has been said. Slaves are human beings. Like the rest of our fellow creatures they must die and render to God an account of their actions. The duty of a clergyman is, to preach the gospel to all the earth; he is to expound the moral law, and by precept and example to induce mankind to embrace Christianity. With these data only as a guide, regardless of our domestic policy, and seemingly unconscious of the necessity of drawing a broad line of distinction between the two classes which distinguish the community, a few of our reverend friends, in their *behaviour* and *teachings*, apply the same rules to the black as the white man: thereby laying the foundation for opinions inimical to the peace of the State, and hence to the cause of Christ itself. With scarcely an exception, the error, I have noticed, is not justly ascribable only to those preachers, who, as loyal disciples of Wilberforce in their native land, are imperatively called upon, it would appear, to propagate in some form, at the home of their adoption, the dogmas of their departed leader; and this is to be effected not by the matter of their discourses, but the incorporation into their pastoral government of what emphatically is—the levelling system. Impelled by the paramount injunction to watch over the souls of the destitute, they, having that isolated principle in view, are, at this moment, pursuing a course of conduct in reference to our coloured population which may terminate in habits of irremediable insubordination. I would here ask, whether it be practicable to advance the interests of true religion by creating a spirit of discontent? Can the mild and sublime precepts of scripture be imprinted on the mind when it is excited by conflicting sensations, or awakened by a sense of injury and oppression? Is it wise on *any* occasion to act as though the population of South-Carolina were homogeneous? If our institutions require, that a portion of the people of the State should be treated *in every place and at all times* as a

subordinate caste, by what authority, human or divine, does the citizen violate that obligation? Need I say the experience of the world attests, that the battle of the cross can no where be successfully waged, unless the laws of the land and the established usages of society are faithfully cherished and supported.

No Christian will deny the importance of religious instruction to slaves. On this head there is no difference of opinion. The moot points are, how ought they to be taught, and to what extent? Is it advisable to make them acquainted with the whole Bible, or to teach them every doctrine which that holy book inculcates? In a word, do considerations, predicated on the spiritual welfare of the blacks, demand, that their religious knowledge should be co-extensive with that of their owners. I answer unhesitatingly, No! The enforcement of such a project would entitle its friends to a room in the Lunatic Asylum. Let the slave be informed on points essential to his salvation, and the whole duty of the instructor is fulfilled. The mind of the negro is not prepared for the refinements and subtleties of the evangelical school—it cannot grasp principles which, to be appreciated, require the exercise of a cultivated intellect. Embark the African, ignorant as he is, on the wide sea of ecclesiastical disputation, or lead him into the labyrinth constructed by the variant sects into which the Christian community is divided, and you at once unsettle the basis on which every movement of his life has been guided. In a moment all before him is confusion; he has no clear conception of any religious truth. Failing to reconcile doctrines apparently contradictory, his ambition and curiosity are unduly excited; in anxious and unprofitable meditations his soul becomes absorbed, and, in time we behold him a wild and restless fanatic—an enemy to himself, and useless, if not dangerous to his master. This is a true history of many servants, who have been irretrievably ruined by a false conception on the part of the owner or teacher, of the duties which christianity enjoins.

In what mode ought slaves to be evangelized? In reply to this interesting interrogatory, several communications are now before the public, on three of which I propose to submit some reflections.

1st. "The Report of the Committee, to whom was referred the subject of the religious instruction of the coloured population, of the Synod of South-Carolina and Georgia, at its late session in Columbia, (S. C.) December 5th-9th, 1833."

Sanctioned, as the Report is, by so august an assemblage as the Synod of two States, it is with unaffected diffidence, that I dissent from several of its positions. In the first place, I cannot subscribe to the doctrine that, in the effort to convert the heathen, the consequences are not to be maturely weighed. In rebutting the argument that, the end of religious instruction will be emancipation, the committee exclaim, "*Come what may*, as Christians, we have no alternative. If we are to obey God our Saviour, we must preach the Gospel to servants." This is an unfortunate declaration. Its inevitable effect will be to invalidate the opinions and principles which the authors of the Report so ably vindicate. Should the means, which they recommend be followed in their adoption by indications of revolt, or greater indisposition for labour, would the watch word of the Committee still be, it is "the cause of God our Saviour!" Onward! Onward!" From the spirit and tenor of the pamphlet, as well as from matters needlessly introduced, I deduce the inference, that, in the estimation of the Synod, slavery is unlawful. Considering the command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," as authority sufficient for us to bestow the gift of God upon every one who does not possess it, under of course the limitations and restrictions imposed by society, the impropriety of the following quotations and comments will readily be perceived:—"God hath made of one blood all the nations of men." "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The negroes are our neighbours, for they are men, members of the same great family. If they are not our neighbours, whom we are bound to love as ourselves, we have no neighbours at all." "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." "God is no respecter of persons." It is true the Committee say that "this rule of action, does not recklessly break down *just* distinctions in society," but it is equally true, that the sentences quoted contain the foundation argument on which the emancipationist proposes to erect the superstructure of his schemes. If, however, the conclusion I have drawn

be erroneous, no one can mistake the views of the Synod in relation to the pernicious and demoralizing effects of slavery. "The influence of the negroes upon the moral and religious interests of the whites, say they, is destructive in the extreme. We cannot go into special detail. It is unnecessary. We make our appeal to universal experience. We are chained to a putrid carcase! it sickens and destroys us. We have a millstone hanging about the neck of our society, to sink us deep in the sea of vice. Our children are corrupting from their infancy; nor can we prevent it. Many an anxious parent, like the Missionary in foreign lands, wishes that his children could be brought beyond the reach of the corrupting influence of the depraved heathen. Nor is this influence confined to mere childhood. If that were all, it would be tremendous. But it follows us into youth, into manhood, and in old age. And when we come directly into contact with their depravity in *the management* of them, then come temptations and provocations and trials that unsearchable grace only can enable us to endure. In all our intercourse with them, we are undergoing a process of intellectual and moral deterioration; and it requires almost super-human effort to maintain a high standing either for intelligence or piety." This is certainly a revolting picture, far exceeding in its sombre colours the melancholy delineation by the graphic pencil of Jefferson. If the description of the African's influence be as deleterious as the Committee represent it, then has the period actually arrived, when the plantation States should imitate the recent example of the British nation. Then, indeed, bidding adieu to property we have so long cherished, and that dear native land from whose bosom we have been so bountifully supplied, should we pass into other regions, where no sinister power affects the "moral and religious interests" of man. But where was the necessity for this fancy sketch, as I hold it to be? Does it not leave room for suspicion, admitting the soundness of the Report on the matter under review, that the Committee would prepare the way for what *ought* to happen? Nay, can we hesitate an instant between the preservation of property and that of our immortal souls? Elevated and ingenuous as the sentiments of the Synod unquestionably are, yet the peculiar opinions they so zealously advocate, prevent them, in

my judgment, from being competent or judicious advisers on the subject, in which too their *feelings* are so strongly enlisted. Their plan is accordingly sophistical and illusory. That the slave-holder and his family should officiate as teachers to their own people is so palpably objectionable, if it were practicable, in every light in which the suggestion can be viewed, that I need only observe, when the scene shall be exhibited of the people of South-Carolina, tri-daily, according to Mr. Clay, or weekly, as recommended by the Committee, "reading and explaining the Bible and conversing with their servants on the subject of the soul's immortality," the reign of fanaticism and misrule will have commenced. The fundamental error of philanthropists on the point to which our inquiry is directed, is, the attempting of too much, and with means illy calculated to attain the end they so ardently desire to accomplish. Apparently insensible of the danger of precipitancy of action, they aim at once to raze the very citadel of our feelings, associations and prejudices. Christians occupy but a small portion of the habitable globe, still the word of the Redeemer has been taught for nearly two centuries. If it be difficult to convert the educated man to the practical duties of the Gospel, how much more so the vulgar and illiterate? Why have not the labours of Missionaries in reference to the Indians been even partially successful? Why do the natives of Hindostan, intermixed as they are with a British population, pertinaciously adhere to the principles and rites of their own religion? Chiefly, I admit, because the education, the mode of life, and the whole current of thought of the heathen are opposed to the restraints which Christianity imposes; but also because the preachers have not readily conformed to their usages and practices, (not incompatible with the Christian law,) until by gradual and cautious means they had so reclaimed the roughness and ferocity of their nature as to enable the evangelical visitor to speak freely and advantageously. In communicating religious knowledge to slaves, the instructor has not only the difficulties in relation to the Indian to encounter, but other obstacles arising from the relation they bear to their owners and the State. Hence, no system adapted to the freemen of this country, is applicable to those in servitude; nor ought the endeavours to Christianize the latter to be commensurate with

those of the former. These propositions the Committee would reverse. Why, in all the speculations on this matter, is it deemed advisable, that greater exertions be made in behalf of vassals than any other class? Are they more ignorant of the truths of God's revelation than the free persons of colour? Would it be more acceptable to the Almighty to convert them than the "wanderer of the forest?" In the pamphlet before me, masters are solemnly invoked substantially to engage in the discharge of clerical functions, to call to their aid the members of their own families, pious and willing neighbours," and "Missionaries, the expense of whose labours must be borne by a neighbourhood of Planters," to form "associations," and to "*employ all who present themselves;*" they are advised moreover to institute "daily or weekly schools for negro children," and "*to conduct the labour and discipline of the plantation on Gospel principles.*" Now, with a heart devoted to the seeking after truth, may I ask, and I would do it with the solemnity befitting the importance of the interrogatory, whether any device to turn the ungodly from the evil of their ways was ever framed, more admirably calculated practically to enslave the owner and to liberate his bonds man? I would further inquire, whether, (Mr. Clay's notable plan excepted,) so full a system, or one in which the imagination has been more severely tasked, was ever contrived, or attempted to be executed with regard to any other order of beings in any part of the habitable globe? To these questions, I am free to say, that a satisfactory answer cannot be given, unless it be in the spirit of the apothegm, that all men are created equal.

2d. Communication in the "Gospel Messenger," for September.

I will not pause to comment on the dangerous and unsound position that, "the discharge of an obligation can *never* be impolitic." Admitting that, "whatever the divine wisdom enjoins must be the true policy for individuals and nation," yet, are the time and manner of effecting an object not to be consulted? Shall we adopt improvidently any and every measure which our Christian duty inculcates? In our evangelical labours, ought not the circumstances of society and the dangers that encompass it, to be duly weighed? Although the proper imparting of religious information to negroes might not endanger the pub-

lic peace, still, it must be conceded, that where prudence and circumspection are not scrupulously observed, there may be reverence to the Lord in the face, but the malignity of the fiend in the heart. Were not many of the blacks who distinguished themselves in the contemplated conspiracy of 1822, "catechists," and proverbially faithful disciples of Christ?" Nat Turner, it is said, was a professor, if not a promulgator of the Scriptures, and so was Touissant of St. Domingo. It was not true religion that influenced the minds of those deluded persons, but a maddening zeal brought about by the men in high places. Again: The South are not, and I trust never will be prepared to establish among our servants a system of ecclesiastical preferment. They cannot allow any slave or free negro to assume an authority and influence, in derogation of the right, which, in this community, should be the exclusive property of the whites. Coloured preachers, lecturers, and catechists, have been the instruments of positive evils to society; apparent good they might have rendered; of real benefit, they never have been to any one. I am aware that the West-India bishops employed catechists, white or coloured—that every slave over five years old was compelled to attend to their instructions, and that the bishop, once in six months, visited each plantation to examine those whom the catechist had been engaged in teaching. Is this scheme recommended to our notice? Are we not conversant with the fact that, for many years, the British people and British government were preparing both master and bondsman for the event which has occurred; and that, in order as they imagined, to insure a peaceable issue to their project, the banner of the Saviour was unfurled? It can no longer be disguised that, in general, all the lucubrations on this subject are predicated on the assumption, that, as the time is approaching, when the slave will assume the separate and equal station to which, in the opinion of modern reformists, he is entitled by the laws of nature and of the Author of our being, he ought quickly to be enabled, through spiritual indoctrination, to meet the change as becomes the servants of the Most High. Is the writer of this opinion? In advising the following of Abraham's example, I think, I perceive the main-spring of all his deliberations. "And God said unto Abraham, he that is born in the house, and he that is bought with money of

any stranger, shall be circumcised." "Hereby," we are informed, "they were introduced into the best of schools—the Church. At this moment their religious education may be said to have commenced. Henceforth *they were under the care of the priesthood, subject to church discipline, required to attend upon its instruction and worship, and to participate in its significant and moving ceremonies.* At home, Abraham was by his example and authority, to train in the way of the Lord, not his children only, but the rest of his household also, and God promises that his blessing will crown this faithful master's zeal with success." If the author of "Thoughts, &c.," really sees "no such difference in the civil condition of men, as to make it necessary, in the case of any class to depart from the divinely prescribed method of religious education," I must be pardoned for asserting that, he has read history to but little purpose, and that the experience of his own times he would stubbornly disregard. The spectacle of about three hundred thousand slaves under "the care of the Church" of South-Carolina, preparing themselves "with prayer and fasting," to receive the admonitions and precepts of the Saviour, is one of those fairy sketches educed from the exuberance of an erratic fancy. I respect the clerical profession. I entertain a high sense of the services they have rendered my native State. I believe that in zeal, ability and purity of purpose, they can vie with their brethren in any section of our country; yet, I would not consent to subject my people to their supervision, until I had resolved personally to till the ground; nor would I allow them at any time to exercise an influence directly or remotely incompatible with plantation discipline. That result, I feel assured, would infallibly be produced by the adoption of the plan urged in the "Gospel Messenger." Conceding the validity of the proposition, in the abstract, that "offences against God ought to excite more displeasure and be more severely punished than offences against man," yet in what age of the Christian era has that canonical principle ever been enforced? Theocratical institutions have existed, but the days when God condescended immediately to superintend the affairs of any portion of his people have long since passed by. We are not now to be told, that the violator of the second commandment should meet the rebel's fate, or that, the servant who

takes the name of the Lord in vain, ought to be punished with "more" severity than he who insists on sitting at his master's table. Such a scheme of government would soon constitute, I may in verity say, the world one vast charnel-house. Its execution in our land would daily consign more human victims to the altar, than the laws of the Inquisition, at the acme of their demoniacal operation, were able in any one year to sacrifice. I again reiterate the conviction, that these ebullitions of feeling, for I cannot believe them to be deliberative opinions, shew that our philanthropists would make ample provision for the event which is about to happen, and that ought to occur. In this wise, by alarming the holders of slave property, they operate to the serious detriment of the interest they so fervently desire to succeed. Here I would record my deliberate persuasion, that no change in the moral or religious character of the negro will take place, unless the plan to effect it is based on the principle, that personal servitude, as it now exists in the plantation States, is right and proper—that it ought to continue, and must at all hazards be maintained.

3d. Detail of a plan for the moral improvement of negroes on plantations, read before the Georgia Presbytery, by Thomas S. Clay, of Bryan County, Georgia—1833.

The following is the system proposed. 1st. Preaching on the Sabbath. 2d. Sabbath-schools to be taught orally. 3d. Evening meetings, to be conducted either by associations, agents or masters, acting independently of each other. I agree with Mr. Clay that, our slaves should be permitted and encouraged to attend on public worship, and that, they should be compelled, so far as abstaining from work and their usual amusements can attain that purpose, to keep holy the Sabbath day. I object totally, however, for the general reasons already advanced, and for others that will readily suggest themselves, to "the preacher adapting a part of every sermon to their intellectual wants," or, to "the giving out one or two lines of a hymn, that they may join in the exercises." This a device of the levellers, and too heterodox for the present state of public opinion. 2d. Sabbath schools in Church. Of this I am an advocate. The catechetical mode of instruction, orally communicated, is accompanied by advantages which cannot be acquired in any other way.

In the words of Mr. Clay, "the attention of the blacks is secured, for they must listen in order to reply; the teacher is required to simplify his instruction, to meet their understanding; the repetition of the proposition aloud in the form of an answer assists the memory; and lastly, it certifies the teacher of their attention." By this means their obligations to the Almighty and their owners may be fully understood. With the prominent portions of Scripture which shew the duties of servants and the rights of masters, it is absolutely necessary they should be intimately acquainted. This matter, so important to the interests of the citizen and the well-being of the State, is seldom, I am sorry to state, even adverted to by any preacher. Without dwelling on the subject, I would merely remark, that the Sabbath school should be opened only in the day—either before the usual meeting of the regular congregation or immediately after divine service. I would also add, that the fears of the negro ought seldom to be appealed to, by the Clergyman; a merciful Saviour and not a revengeful God should, in the main, be presented to his mind. Speak to him *mildly* as a human being liable to error, and *persuade* him to approach nearer the throne of Jehovah by obeying those few and simple laws, a belief in which, we are taught, is essential to future happiness. If by *word or manner* he is inspired with terror, you may make him a madman but never a Christian.

3d. Evening meetings on the plantations where they reside, to be conducted by the members of Associations formed for the religious instruction of the negroes, or by their agents, or by individual planters. To every society for any such exclusive purpose, I am decidedly and unalterably opposed. Let it be remembered, that slaves are the property of the people of South-Carolina, and that that portion of our inhabitants is distinguished for credulity, fanaticism, and repugnance to labour. In reference to it, all experiments, on which the public sense and the public feeling have not in some form been ascertained, are inexpedient and unwise, if not perilous. No irresponsible body has a right to legislate for the community on a matter in which every one is deeply concerned. Will not the object of the Associations be misunderstood by the blacks? May they not suppose that their true design is the preparing of the slave for civil and political elevation? I

speak advisedly when I say, that among at least a few servants, the Associations in St. Lukes were supposed to have that end in view.' The discussion of the Missouri question contributed to bring about direful and unlooked-for consequences. In truth, every scheme that relates to the government of our coloured population, is quickly known to them, and, unfortunately, by the stratagems of incendiaries, they are made to "see through a glass darkly." Another mode of communicating religious information to slaves, upon which Mr. Clay comments, is, what he terms, domestic, to be conducted by the resident planter and his family. This mode must have been suggested to Mr. Clay by a Tappanist. If friendly to the policy and perpetuity of our institutions, it could not have been the fruit of his own reflections. What is the scheme? The adults of the plantation to be assembled every evening in a well-lighted room, appropriated to devotional purposes—to occupy benches, each bench provided with a monitor, whose duty it should be to report the absent; at these meetings, the master, or some other member of the family, to officiate as instructor. Again: the children of the plantation, says this Utopian projector, should be collected daily—with clean faces and hands, at some convenient hour in the morning, and, if the engagements of the teacher do not interfere, again in the afternoon. Here, he further remarks, hymns, scripture-cards, the commandments, parables, &c., &c., are the most suitable lessons. By this wild and fantastic project, it is proposed substantially to substitute an ecclesiastical government for the civil system; or, in other words, to rule our slaves by perpetual prayer and exhortation, instead of the practical exercise of the master's authority. Is Mr. Clay a planter? Does he attend diligently to his calling? If so, he must be a man of unwonted industry and perseverance. He has not only to discharge the arduous and harassing duties of the plantation, but, thrice a day, to proclaim the word of God to ignorant minds and unwilling ears. This part of the plan, recommended by the Georgia schemer, is so visionary, and conflicts so grossly with the common sense of our citizens, that I am forced to the conclusion, either that Mr. Clay did not maturely consider the question assigned by the Presbytery of Bryan County, or that he is in heart an Abolitionist. I cannot imagine a contrivance better

calculated in time to separate us from our property. Without exciting the suspicions of the public, the followers of Garrison, by this very expedient, may eventually attain the goal of their desire. Long reflection and observation have satisfied me that, under the sacred garb of religious instruction,* the poison of insubordination will yet be disseminated by some misguided promulgators of the Christian law. It behooves us all then, especially the planters of the State, to speak plainly on a topic in reference to which it is criminal to exercise either fastidiousness or reserve. Doctrines are afloat, indulgencies extended, and systems practised, that are destined to re-act on the theatre of Carolina the revolting scenes of a sister State.

If it be necessary to concentrate public opinion with regard to the moral and religious improvement of persons of colour, in lieu of societies, having that end *solely* in view, it would be proper to operate by means of Agricultural and Police Associations. Composed as they are of land and slave-holders, they constitute the authority, from which a system, at once simple and safe, yet efficient, may be expected to emanate. With such bodies, let the philanthropist communicate, and I feel confident that, with the result, every one will be gratified. At present there is obviously much contrariety of opinion between the Clergy and Laity on this subject. One, guided by its wishes and apprehensions, would pass the bounds prescribed by policy and interest; the other, alarmed at the quixotic and hazardous schemes, the offspring of unwary minds, is unwilling to try the efficacy of any suggestion in behalf of the spiritual wants of their servants. Both parties perhaps err. It is certain that the judgment of the planter, although decidedly in favor of bettering the moral and religious condition of his people, is, notwithstanding, strongly opposed to all the expedients which are known to the public in furtherance of that purpose.

One word, in conclusion, in relation to negroes on plantations. To such the Gospel may perhaps be advantageously preached under the following restrictions:—

- 1st. No negro from any other plantation to be present.
- 2d. Divine service to be held only on the Sabbath and in the day.

* See Appendix, Note D.

3d. No Clergyman, although a slave-holder, who believes in the illegitimacy of personal servitude, or who advocates directly or indirectly the doctrine of emancipation, to be allowed to officiate.

4th. He who is no slave-holder, but a friend to our domestic institutions, not to be permitted to preach except in the presence of two or more white witnesses, who shall be owners of slaves, and except with the written approbation of the employer.

ERRATA.

Page 1, line 1, after Planter dele comma.

- " 5, " 4, for "ssue" read *issue*.
 " 6, " 7, for "irretrievable" read *irretrievable*.
 " " 25, for "he" read *he*.
 " 8 " 4, dele "the" at the end.
 " " 20, for "order" read *orders*.
 " 10 " 19, after expiated, add a *comma*.
 " 11 " 28, dele "the" before *task*.
 " 13 " 7, from the bottom insert *comma* after that.
 " 18 " 9, " " " " after *nature*.
 " 19 " 22, for "he read *the*.
 " " 37, for "nation" read *nations*.
 " 21 " 14, for "divine by" read *divinely*. } in some of the copies.

APPENDIX.

Note A.

The 2d Section of the 4th Article of the Constitution of the United States expressly declares that, "No person held to service or labour in one State under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labour, but shall be delivered up on the claim of the party to whom such service or labour may be due." Judicial decisions have in every instance, distinctly recognized the controlling influence of this constitutional provision, of which, however, the following Act of the Legislature of New-York, relative to proceedings upon writs of *Homine re plegliando*, is, I apprehend, substantially a violation:—

"1. That the person claiming the services of a fugitive or his agent, shall pay weekly, for the support of such fugitive, the sum of two dollars per week, so long as said fugitive shall remain in custody, by virtue of the provisions of article first, title first, chapter ninth, part third, of the revised statutes; and in default of such payment, such fugitive shall be discharged from custody upon his own recognizance by a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, or Supreme Court Commissioner, upon an application to be made at the Chambers.

"2. The person claiming any fugitive from service, or his agent, after a writ of *Homine re plegliando* has been issued may be held to bail by an order of a Judge of the Court out of which such writ of *Homine re plegliando* issued, in such sum as said Court shall order, not less than two hundred and fifty dollars, conditioned for the payment of all damages which may be sustained by such person claimed to be a fugitive from service, in case that it shall not be established that he is such fugitive."

The above, it is said, was passed at the instance of the New-York Manumission Society.

Note B.

If proof were wanting to substantiate the position, that the black man will not voluntarily labour, the following provisions of a rural code to compel the people to work for their subsistence by inflicting penalties upon idleness, recently passed by the Senate and Chamber of Representatives of Hayti, are conclusive on the point:

"ART. 174. All persons who are not proprietors or farmers in the place in which they reside, and shall not have engaged themselves to work for some proprietor or farmer, shall be reported as vagabonds; shall be arrested by the rural police of the place in which they may be found, and brought before the Justice of the Peace of the district."

"ART. 177. If, after eight days' detention, they shall refuse to work, they shall be sent to labour on the public works of the town or district in which they may be arrested, until they consent to work in the fields."

"ART. 180. Every labourer, who, on working days, and at the hours at which he ought to be employed, shall be found unoccupied, or found walking upon the public ways, shall be considered as an idler, arrested as such, and brought before a justice of the peace, who, for the first offence may send him to prison for twenty-four hours; and for any repetition may send him to the public works."

"ART. 184. The ordinary labours in the field shall commence at day-light; and continue till mid-day, with an interval of half an hour for breakfast, the labour shall be resumed at two o'clock, and continued till sunset."

"ART. 185. Pregnant women shall be employed only upon light work, but after the fourth month of their pregnancy they shall not be compelled to work in the fields at all."

"ART. 186. Four months after their delivery they shall resume their labours in the field, but shall not begin work till an hour after sunrise, and continue till eleven o'clock, and shall work in the afternoon only from two o'clock till an hour before sunset."

"ART. 190. Saturdays and Sundays, and fete days, being entirely at the disposal of the labourers, they are not to be permitted to leave their work on the other days for the purpose of dancing or amusement, either day or night. The delinquents in such a case shall be liable to imprisonment for three days for the first offence, and for six days on every repetition of the offence."

Note C.

Instead of the two clauses alluded to, I would here give a copy of the bill, not as introduced by me, but as amended and adopted at two readings by both branches of the Legislature, by a very decided vote.* At the third reading,

* Thirty-eight to two in the Senate.

it was rejected in the Senate by a majority of three, on the ground, as I believe, for it was not avowed in debate, except by two gentlemen, that the first clause was at variance with the policy of the State. Of every planter, I ask a serious examination of the several provisions of the bill.

" A BILL to amend the Law in relation to Slaves, and free persons of colour.

SEC. 1. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives, now met and sitting in General Assembly, and by the authority of the same. If any person shall hereafter teach any slave or free person of colour to read or write, or aid or assist in the teaching of any slave or free person of colour to read or write, or cause or procure any slave or free person of colour to be taught to read or write, such person, if a free white person, upon conviction thereof, shall for each and every offence against this act, be fined not exceeding one hundred dollars, and imprisoned not more than six months, or if a free person of colour, shall be whipped not exceeding fifty lashes, fined not exceeding fifty dollars, at the discretion of the Court of Magistrates and freeholders before which such free person of colour is tried, and if a slave, shall be whipped at the discretion of the Court, not exceeding fifty lashes, the informer to receive one half of the fine, and to be a competent witness.

SEC. 2. It shall not hereafter be lawful for any slave to preach, lecture or give religious instruction to slaves, except upon his owner's plantation, and with the written approbation and consent of the owner or his agent, under the penalty of fifty lashes for each and every offence, nor shall any slave or slaves from any other plantation be allowed to attend such preaching or religious instruction, under the like penalty, unless at least three white persons be present who shall be owners of slaves.

SEC. 3. It shall not be lawful for any free person of colour to use or exercise the functions of a clergyman, or to preach or lecture; and any free person of colour who shall preach or lecture, shall for each and every offence incur the penalties prescribed for free persons of colour teaching slaves or free persons of colour to read or write, the informer to receive one half of the fines, and to be a competent witness.

SEC. 4. No white person shall preach, lecture or give religious instruction to any assemblage or congregation of coloured persons unless he be an owner of slaves, and if not an owner of slaves, with the written approbation of not less than five owners of slaves in the neighbourhood and in the presence of three white persons, who shall be owners of slaves; and if any person shall be convicted thereof, such person shall be liable for each and every offence, to be imprisoned not exceeding six months, and fined not exceeding one hundred dollars, the informer to receive one half of the fine, and to be a competent witness, Provided, that nothing herein contained shall prevent any white person from preaching, lecturing, or giving religious instruction to any assemblage or congregation of slaves upon the plantation of the owner or person having charge of such slaves and with his written approbation and consent.

SEC. 5. If any person shall employ or keep as a clerk, or permit to act as a clerk or salesman, any person of colour, free or slave, in or about any shop, store or house used for trading, such person shall be liable to indictment, and

upon conviction thereof, shall be fined for each and every such offence, not exceeding one hundred dollars, and imprisoned six months, the informer to receive one half the fine, and to be a competent witness.

"SEC. 6. If any vender or retailer of spirituous liquors, or shop-keeper, shall sell, give, or in any otherwise deliver any spirituous liquor to any slave except upon the express and written order of the owner, or person having the care and management of such slave; such person, if a white person, upon conviction, shall be imprisoned not exceeding six months, and be fined not exceeding one hundred dollars, or if a free person of colour or slave, shall incur the penalties prescribed for free persons of colour or slaves, teaching free persons of colour or slaves to read and write, for each and every offence.

"SEC. 7. No license shall hereafter be granted by any board of commissioners of this State, until the applicant shall have taken before a magistrate of the Parish or District in which he may reside, the following oath or affirmation on his applying for his first license after the passing of this act. "I, A. B. do swear or affirm, that I will not at any time during the period for which this license is granted, sell, give, or in any otherwise deliver any spirituous liquor to any slave contrary to the true intent and meaning of the law to prevent the selling, giving or delivering of spirituous liquors to slaves;" and upon his application for a second license, he shall, in addition to the above oath or affirmation, take the following—"I have not at any time since the taking out of my last license, sold, given, or in any otherwise delivered any spirituous liquor to any slave, nor have I directly or indirectly traded, trafficked, or dealt with any slave, contrary to the true intent and meaning of the law to prevent the selling, giving or delivering of spirituous liquor to slaves, and the trading trafficking and dealing with the same."—False swearing under this act is hereby declared to be perjury.

"SEC. 8. Upon the trial of any person having the use and occupation of any shop, store, or house used for trading, indicted for trading with slaves without a permit under the act of the General Assembly of this State now of force, it may be sufficient for the conviction of such person to prove that the slave charged in the indictment, to have been traded, trafficked and dealt with, entered such shop, store or house used for trading with the article, or articles charged in the indictment to have been sold to said defendant, and left said shop, store, or house without the article or articles charged in the indictment to have been sold by said defendant to said slave, and left the said store, shop, or house with the same, immediately after.

"SEC. 9. And be it further enacted, that this act shall take effect from and after the first day of May next."

The second section is objectionable. The liberty of giving religious instruction by a slave should be confined exclusively to his own family. The fourth section might be advantageously altered. In section sixth, the following amendment, after the word "slave" in the fourth line, should be introduced, viz—specifying that the same is for the sole use of the said owner, or person having the care and management of such slave.

Note D.

Extract of a letter from a distinguished citizen of Virginia, dated Richmond, November, 1831, to ———

"I am fully persuaded, the spirit of insubordination which has and still manifests itself in Virginia, had its origin among and emanated from the Yankee population, upon their first arrival amongst us; but most especially the Yankee pedlars and traders. The course has been by no means a direct one. They began first, by making them religious—their conversations were of that character—telling the negroes, God was no respecter of persons—the black man was as good as the white—that all men were born free and equal—that they cannot serve two masters—that the white people rebelled against England to obtain freedom, so have the blacks a right to do.

In the mean time, I am sure without any purpose of this kind, the preachers, principally northern, were very assiduous in operating upon our population—day and night they were at work, and religion became, and is the fashion of the times. Finally, our females, and those the most respectable, were persuaded that it was piety to teach negroes to read and write, to the end that they might read the Scriptures. Many of them became tutoresses in Sunday schools, and pious distributors of tracts from the New-York Tract Society. At this point more active operations commenced—large assemblies of negroes were suffered to take place for religious purposes. Then commenced the efforts of the black preachers; often from the pulpit these pamphlets and papers were read, followed by the incendiary publications of Walker, Garrison and Knapp of Boston. These, with songs and hymns of a similar character were circulated, read and commented upon; we resting in apathetic security until the Southampton affair.

From all that has come to my knowledge during and since that affair, I am convinced most fully, that every black preacher in the whole country east of the Blue Ridge was in the secret—that the plans as published by those northern prints were adopted and acted upon by them—that their congregations, as they were called, knew nothing of the intended rebellion, except a few leading and intelligent men, who may have been headmen in the church—the mass were prepared by making them aspire to an equal station by such conversations as I have related as the first step. I am informed that they had settled their form of government to be that of the white people, whom they intended to cut off to a man—with this difference, that the preachers were to be their Governors, Generals and Judges. I feel fully justified to myself in believing that northern incendiaries, tracts, sunday-schools, religion, reading and writing, have accomplished this end."